

## ISRAEL MATTERS

**Mt. 24:6** And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. <sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of sorrows *ῥῶδῖν*, *birth pains*.

Many terms are presently being expressed against the Jews and the nation of Israel. This is nothing new for since the earliest times the Hebrews have been targets of hatred. For example, **Ex. 1:22** Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river. ... Centuries later in Babylon, Haman requested Xerxes, **Esther 3:8** There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. <sup>9</sup> If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed.

The Jews have not only suffered under the Egyptians and the Babylonians, but also many others including the Assyrians, the Medes and the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Turks, and the 'Christians' since the Emperor Constantine's 'conversion' to Christianity in the fourth century AD, to the eleventh and twelfth centuries when the Crusaders plundered Jerusalem. With the decline of Jerusalem, Roman Catholicism gradually taught Rome was the new Jerusalem, and the Jewish race became outcasts. Sadly, even Martin Luther stirred up anti-Semitism in a scathing 65,000-word pamphlet he wrote in 1545 entitled 'The Jews and Their Lies'. In it he endorsed the burning of Jewish synagogues and schools, the destruction of their homes, "all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them", and 'eject them forever from the country'. In more recent times, his views fuelled the Nazi movement ... and presently, we are seeing the latest outpouring of vitriol upon the nation, which is simply engaged in defending itself. ... Anti-Semitism, - hatred of the Jews, - is the oldest continuous malicious hostility in the history of mankind, and its resurgence ought to be concerning for every Bible-believing Christian.

Nowhere in the Bible does God say the Jews are perfect. On the contrary, He was all too aware of their constant imperfections. Nevertheless, He claimed them as His own, **Dt. 7:6** For thou *the people of Israel* art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. Of them the prophet Zephaniah declared, **Zech. 2:8** he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye. ... God has a special place for the nation and people of Israel.

Obviously, this is a huge subject stretching throughout Scripture, nevertheless, here are five reasons why we should love and pray for the Jewish people.

First of all, **our Saviour was born a Jew**. Linking to the Old Testament, the New Testament begins, **Mt. 1:1** The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, *the son of David, the son of Abraham*. ... Similarly, Paul began addressing the Jews and Gentiles in the church at Rome, **Rom. 1:3** Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was *made of the seed of David according to the flesh*. ... Also, Paul longed for the salvation of his *kinsmen according to the flesh*. Who are *Israelites*, to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and *of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came* (Rom. 9:3-5).

The Lord Jesus, the Son of God, was born in Bethlehem, in Judea, in the land of Israel, *a Jew*. ... As a young Jewish boy, He was taken by Joseph and Mary into Egypt, and after a time in Egypt Joseph was instructed to return, ... not to the West Bank, or Palestine, or the 'occupied territories' but ... **Mt. 2:20** Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into *the land of Israel*. ... That is how God calls the land He promised Abram, **Gen. 12:1** Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: <sup>2</sup> And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: <sup>3</sup> And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

And here is how steadfast is God's covenant love for them, **Jer. 31:35** Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: <sup>36</sup> If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. <sup>37</sup> Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD ... and He repeats it (33:25,26). ... A privileged nation into whom **our Saviour was born a Jew**.

Secondly, **the Scriptures are Jewish**. This precious Book, inspired by God, was given to one community of people on this earth, - *the Jews*. Every writer, - perhaps with the exception of Job, - was a Jew! ... God has blessed the entire world with this Book He inspired Jews to write! In the Old Testament, the Jews had the Word of God, as Paul explains, **Rom. 3:2** unto them were committed the oracles of God. ... Therefore, to the Jews you and I are grateful for receiving the Scriptures, **Dt. 4:7** For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? <sup>8</sup> And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law? ... And with this Word of God, Jesus commissioned His disciples (fellow-Jews), Go ye

into all the world, and preach the gospel to *every creature [Jew and Gentile]* (Mk. 16:15). ... The Word went from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, through modern-day Turkey, to Greece, and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8), preached by Jews. ... Our Saviour was a Jew, and **the Scriptures are Jewish**.

Thirdly, **the Sufferings of the Jews**. The first Christians were converted Jews who endured aggression for preaching the Scriptures concerning Jesus the Messiah. ... Peter and John were imprisoned for it, James and Stephen were martyred for it, and many including Paul were chased from city to city for it.

The Bible also speaks about the bitterness towards the Jews in the last days, Jer. 30:5 For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. ... <sup>7</sup> Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even *the time of Jacob's trouble*; but he shall be saved out of it. ... *Why* has Israel endured, and *is* enduring, adversity like no other nation in history? Because of their blessed position before God. Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman, *salvation is of the Jews* (Jn. 4:22). Similarly, the angel told Joseph Mary's Son was to be called JESUS: for he shall save *his people* from their sins (Mt. 1:21).

... To the Jews *first* God sent His Son (Jn. 1:11), however, Jn. 1:11 his own *[the Jews]* received him not. They hated, despised, mocked, and rejected Him, but still He lovingly invited them, Mt. 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ... But they would not, and they brought upon themselves God's judgment, Mt. 23:37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! <sup>38</sup> Behold, *your house is left unto you desolate*. ... And the Lord Jesus prophesied to His disciples how the nation, by continuing in their unbelief, will ultimately endure at a time in the future the most horrendous grief and misery.

This will be at the hands of the Antichrist, who will initially pretend to be their friend and saviour. He will exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing *[displaying]* himself that he is God (II Thess. 2:4). ... And Jesus warns them, Mt. 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) ... <sup>21</sup> For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. <sup>22</sup> And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. ... Pray for the Jews in their sufferings, but it is as nothing compared to how *they will suffer* under the Antichrist!

Our Saviour was a Jew, and through the Jews we have the Scriptures. ... Pray for **the Salvation of the Jews**. God has *not* forsaken them, and even though He took from them their land in 586 BC, He kept His promise and gave it back to them in 1948, resettling them in their own land. ... And He is keeping them to *save* them, **Rom. 11:1** I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. ... **11** I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. <sup>12</sup> Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? ... <sup>15</sup> For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? ... <sup>25</sup> For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. <sup>26</sup> And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: <sup>27</sup> For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. ... **Zech. 12:10** And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. ... **3:1** In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. ... Pray for **the salvation of the Jews** for they are to be saved in the same way as the Gentiles ... *by faith alone, through Christ alone.*

Finally, **the Support to the Jews**. Jesus taught His disciples, **Mt. 6:9** After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. <sup>10</sup> **Thy kingdom come** *L... where to? ...I. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.* ... His Kingdom is to come “in earth” ... *Already*, God has determined in His will, **Ps. 2:6** Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. ... He has promised the nation of Israel, **Is. 62:1** For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. <sup>2</sup> And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name. <sup>3</sup> Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God ... **Zech. 14:9** And the LORD shall be king over all the earth. ... God's passion, God's plan, God's promise!

Presently the Jews do not believe for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart (**II Cor. 3:14,15**). However, Paul says it will change, <sup>16</sup> Nevertheless when it *l.i.e. the Jew* shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. ... God promises the salvation of

the Jews ... and the saved Gentiles who have been grafted in (Rom. 11:17) are to be praying towards that end, **Is. 62:6** I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence, <sup>7</sup> And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

Pray for the salvation of the Jews. ... **Ps. 122:6** Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. ... That is not only referring to peace in relation to Hamas, or Hezbollah, or Fatah, or Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Jordan, or Egypt ... but it is for Jerusalem to know the peace of God in Jesus Christ as their Messiah Who is the Prince of Peace, **Is. 9:7** upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.

Peace *will* come to Jerusalem, for The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this (**Is. 9:7**) ... and in praying for it, we as Gentiles are promised, they shall prosper that love thee (**Ps. 122:6**). ... When the peace of God rests upon Jerusalem, that peace will fill the entire world, **Is. 2:3** he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ... No wonder Satan has the enemy fixated on destroying Israel! ... God's Word promises, **Jer. 3:17** At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem ... <sup>18</sup> to the land that I have given for *an inheritance unto your fathers*.

Presently, Jerusalem is *a cup of trembling* unto all the people round about it ... *a burdensome stone* for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it [**Zech. 12:2,3**]. The nations do not know what to do with the Jews, their city, or their land! ... But being on the Lord's side, we know and we pray as He instructs us, **Is. 66:10** Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her ... <sup>13</sup> For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. ... **Is. 2:4** And he [*the Messiah, the Lord Jesus*] shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. ... **Is. 11:9** They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.

So, as you watch what is happening, *pray* earnestly for the people of Jerusalem and their land of Israel, for their security, their safety, their stability, and their salvation. Since God has chosen them out of all the nations (Dt. 7), *He* will answer our prayers, **Ps. 72:18** Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. <sup>19</sup> And blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen.